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Jacob is sinless in the sight,
Of God's all-searching, sleepless eye ;
His arm shall be an arm of might—
 An arm of victory !
Hark ! hark !—the pealing trumpet rings ;
The voice of tens of thousands sings,
Among them rise the shouts of kings,
 In triumph to the sky :
The Lord is near to guide—to guard ;
Glory and victory to award !

Like thee the lion croucheth down—
And who shall rouse him from his lair ?
Like thee, before his victim shown,
 His terrors doth he rear !
He cares not in his den to lay
His limbs, to shun the scorching day,
Until he feast upon his prey,
 And his warm vitals tear.
Who blesseth Israel, bless'd is he ;
And cursed he who curseth thee !

For out of thee, in time afar,
The glory of the earth shall come :
From Jacob shall beam forth A STAR
 To cheer him in his gloom :
From thee a sceptre shall arise,
And one in vengeance who destroys ;
Kingdoms shall fall—the mighty flies
 To his prepared doom !
Israel shall govern far and free—
His hand shall triumph valiantly !

R. M.

MODERN POETRY.*

This is any thing but a poetical age. Enlightenment and intelligence have advanced : Algernon Sydney's "good old cause" is progressing onward, and, in the tide of events, will now "gain ground with every breaker ;" but poetry is going backward. We speak of Byron, Shelley, Wordsworth, and Coleridge, as of those who have passed from us, and with them all strains of "higher mood" have ceased. They have bequeathed to us only a dreary sense of the insufficiency of their successors. During the last few years we have had a thousand and one delicate and elegant and hot-pressed poems, outpoured upon us—the labours of the common intellects of the land. Half of them sank still-born, and were seen no more ; a few swam for some little months, and perished ; some are, to our shame, still floating along : but, we venture to predict, not one of the leaves of those honey and sweet milk tomes will ever find its way into time's "eternal volume."

We have said that we no longer look on the four great and gifted spirits we have named, as belonging to the present age of poets. Two of them—the youngest and the greatest—have quite passed the well known bourne : "ubi sæva indignatis cor ulterius lacerare nequit." The other two have had their glory eclipsed by a shadow as deep as that

* The Arrow and the Rose—By William Kennedy—1830.

of death. They are not as they were: they have sunk into torpid and uneasy repose—tantalised by useless resources, haunted by vain imaginings: their lips, to use the fine language of William Hazlitt, “idly moving, but their hearts for ever still; or, as the shattered chords vibrate of themselves, making melancholy music to the ear of memory.” Wordsworth and Coleridge are poetically dead. With these then we say, have passed away every thing whereof the present age had to boast itself in poetry. What remains, is, with few exceptions, common-place: a portion of it, to be sure, elegant and good-hearted; and the remainder, we question not, pure and good-natured; but it is not poetry.

We take up a volume of Byron.—The outgoings of one's own heart are painted there, and in the earnest, passionate, communings of his spirit with itself, we feel unconsciously that such are the continual workings of our own soul. We reason with him “high of Providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,” and he speaks our own feelings, exalted in thought, language, and passion. In the impetuous rush of his passionate thoughts, we range, with his spirit, over the earth and the societies of men. His poetry, composed as it is for the most part, of intense intellectual egotism, induces us to bestir ourselves in a high matter; it teaches us to know ourselves. We turn to Shelley, whose mind, too powerful, preyed upon itself. We are lost in delight, and ramble from page to page, from volume to volume: his images and feelings rush to our mind, even as they were first impressed on his own—immediately from nature. Byron teaches us to fear and know ourselves: Shelley, to love all human kind. Strange that such a man should have had the deep yearnings of affection, in which he indulged so fondly, flung back upon him! In reading his poetry, we are invested with a feeling of life and freshness—a sense of deliverance and exaltation; “we breathe freely in the open air of enlarged thought, and deem ourselves ennobled by our relation to a superior mind, and the sense of our own capabilities, which its grand conceptions awaken in us.” We dwell over the pages of Wordsworth—the “still sad music of humanity,” floats around them. Nature is Wordsworth's home: he loves the placid, serene, and passionless—the meanest flower that blows, is his dear and old acquaintance; every natural object around him, simple and unadorned, is nearly connected in his heart with a thousand feelings. In his poetry there is nothing turbulent or impure—no restless speculations—no unregulated fancies:—

“Long have I loved what I behold:
The night that calms—the day that cheers—
The common growth of mother earth
Suffices me; her tears and mirth,
Her humblest mirth and tears.”

Such is the creed of William Wordsworth, and of this creed his writings are an exposition. “The vulgar,” said William Hazlitt, “do not read them: the learned, who see all things through books, do not understand them: the great despise—the fashionable may ridicule them; but the author has created himself an interest in the heart of the retired and lonely student of nature, which can never die!” Coleridge astounds us. The brilliancy and magnificence of his imagination, carries us beyond ourselves; and in his thoughts there is a mysterious depth, which leaves us wrapped in meditation, long after the words which conveyed them to us have passed away. He throws a sense of novelty around that with which we are familiar: he draws out from the merest

common-place, a latent beauty. His ideas have been likened to a river, flowing on for ever, and still murmuring as it flows—discharging its waters, and still replenished—

“And so by many winding nooks it strays
With willing sport to the wild ocean.”

It is strange, but true, that Coleridge is little understood or appreciated. Why this is, we know not, except it be an illustration of Lord Bacon's beautiful remark—“as the stars give little light, because they are so high.” Had he been content to level himself to common imaginations, it had been better for his popularity; but he was content rather to scorn the “present ignorant time.” He walks abroad, as one who knew him well, remarked—“in the majesty of an universal understanding—eyeing the ‘rich strand,’ or ‘golden sky’ above him, and goes sounding on his way in eloquent accents, uncompelled and free!”

Such are the feelings with which we regard the four great poetical spirits of our time. After them follow certain writers—of whose talents we wish to express our admiration, but to whom we cannot concede the title of Poets, in the sense wherewith we apply it to Shakspeare, Dante, Milton, or the four of whom we have spoken. In their works we find much comprehensive thought written in a pure style, and, by one in especial, with a tone of the most profound earnestness. They have wisdom and a “wise enthusiasm;” a little less of “saving knowledge” might probably have prevented their boldest imaginings from sinking, as they usually do, into cold personifications.

We do not wish to speak depreciatingly of the names of Rogers and Campbell, Scott or Moore, which have so long passed current in the land; but we fear that posterity will crop the laurels with which their partial contemporaries have adorned them. Present popularity is not always the sure presage of future glory. Scott can afford to surrender up his poetical crown—it is undeserved, and sits unsteadily. His poetry, as such, is of little “mark or likelihood.” It illustrates the character and rudeness of a former age: it narrates easily, and describes, we believe, faithfully—there an end. Mr. Moore has written certain pretty lyrics, and, should he chance to be mentioned to posterity, will be talked of as a songster and a wit. He is remarkable for what we would call a splendid fluency in all matters. This sometimes oppresses the ear—it is too sweet. His images are too glittering: they distress the eye. His phrases are too richly worded—they weary the tongue, and they cannot rest an instant on the memory—they fleet with the moment. Thomas Moore has been sadly overrated. Little trace of his poems will be found on the onward tide of time. They *may* drop there, but it will be even as

“The snow falls in the river—
A moment white—then melts for ever!”

Of Campbell and Rogers we would speak with great respect. They stand infinitely higher than either Scott or Moore: but posterity will find them wanting. They have been too artificial: there is a *fulsome* smoothness and elegance in their verses. Their harmony is too elaborate and artificial. They have sacrificed the vivifying spirit to the outward form. They commenced their literary career with goodly promise: they gave signs of true and deep and lovely poetry; but they were dandled and spoiled. They lived too much in the drawing-room world: they led too easy and conventional a life. Poetry is a coy

maiden, and she became shy towards Messrs. Campbell and Rogers ; she had been flirting with them—she had never loved them. They then contracted certain ready-made notions of their own superiority, and they wrote books because they fancied they had a reputation for writing. But even in these, their high merits are sufficiently apparent, and they are read with pleasure, though not of the highest kind. There is nothing of sentimental mawkishness in them—they flow on freely and easily, and will be found abounding in that sense of the beautiful, produced by a great acquaintance with books and thoughts acting on the minds of their authors. But this is at best but negative merit, and they will scarcely stand the test of a century, even as second rate poets.

We make a deep plunge, and approach the herd of “small deer”—the “mob of gentlemen who write with ease”—the adored and adoring of album-posessed maidens. We have to deal here only with their general characteristics. We may hereafter chance to speak of them more especially. They rest their chief claims to notice, on the lucky adoption of some of the taking mannerisms of the great poets we have named, interspersed with a certain tricky prettiness, peculiarly their own. Hence we have them divided into “schools.” We have the “silly” and “satanic,” made up of drivelling nonsense—of morbid cant, and religious coxcomby. We have heartless sensuality from the imitators of Lord Byron : sickly refinement from those of Campbell and Rogers. The young persons who walk in the steps of Coleridge, favour us with certain vague abstractions, confusedly embodied : a chaos of words which present no image ; or, if we light on an image, we shall be puzzled to find its archetype. We discover nothing in them that is simple in diction, or really moving in sentiment. Then again, from another class we have sentences nicely balanced—periods well rounded—versification true, according to the latest approved fashion. Their poems, in fact, may be likened to a correct specimen of filagree work. They are a collection of well chosen, and well arranged words ; but without a particle of original feeling—no “looking abroad into universality”—nothing of nerve or vigour—nothing that betokens a bold and powerful grasp of intellect.

Such has been, for some years, the character of our minor poetry. But there will be a reaction in the public taste, or we are bad judges, and never more worthy of trust. It has commenced already, and the fruits are before us. We have in the “Arrow and the Rose,” a better poem than has been written by any of the minor poets for many years. We had not known much of William Kennedy. The extravagance of *Jerdan's Gazette*, caused us to distrust him. But we heard him described by Allan Cunningham, as a “bold manly fellow on his way up Parnassus, beguiling the road with snatches of vigorous verse, in which the thoughts are, at least, as tall as the words.” We looked into his poem, and found that it was so. He writes, because he has felt and thought—there is no quackery in his poem. He takes a subject full of human interest—a gentle and heart-soothing tale of innocent love, wordliness, and quiet endurance—and he has faith enough in these deep materials to trust to them alone. No dream oppresses him—no fancied imaginative spell binds him. He works on a good substance—the staple feelings of humanity, and affects no wisdom beyond that of his fellows. Without any wire-drawn refinings in thought and feeling, he engages our deepest sympathy :—without any abrupt effort, he animates and realizes all he describes, for he connects it in an intimate manner with our daily thoughts and emotions, and even our phraseology. We would select a

few passages, but have difficulty in doing so, as the chief merit of the poem consists in the close development of character and plot, which can never be conveyed to our readers by instancing a detached passage. The story is that of the loves of Henry of Navarre, when prince of Bearne, and Fleurette, the Gardener's Daughter. We give Kennedy's description of his heroine—prefacing it by M. De Fouy's exquisite comment on her character: "Fleurette est la seule des maîtresses de Henri IV. qui l'ait aimé comme il méritait de l'être, le seule qui lui fut fidèle, qu'il pût avouer sans rougir; mais elle ne fut pas *présentée*, elle n'eut pas le *tabouret* chez la reine, elle ne travailla pas avec les ministres et le confesseur, elle ne donna à la France ni princes bâtards, ni princes légitimes: aussi l'histoire n'en fait-elle pas mention."

"The daisy's neatness in her dress;
The lily's chasteness in her air;
As fresh a germ of loveliness
Was the dear maid, as e'er
Yielded a branch of ruddy hue
To sportive beam, or tender dew.
What though no gem was seen to shine
On locks like the autumnal vine—
What though her gait its charm had drawn
From gambol of the bounding fawn—
What though her countenance display'd
The russet apple's blended shade—
Her's were the natural grace and glow
Of health which merry warblers know,
Ere for a cage they have exchang'd
The haunts where they in freedom ranged.
With a small pitcher in her hand,
Humming a touching pastoral song—
Some ancient ditty of the land—
Fleurette oft tripped along
The tangled rabbit-warren, till
She rested at the fountain's brink—
Where, stooping her rude vase to fill,
She first began to think
That if she were not very charming,
Her ugliness was not alarming.
The cold sprite of the waters smil'd
To see that one, so late a child,
Own'd, in her innocence, the common
Besetting sin of ev'ry woman."—pp. 24, 25.

This is graceful and beautiful, and exquisitely in keeping with the character of this "daughter of loveliness." There is something in it far above the ambition of composition—it is a description flowing freely in those simple measures, whose meaning and truth is recognised by all. There is no effort in it—no aiming after effect—no exuberance of fancy—nothing which is not characteristic of the natural graces of the "Gardener's Daughter." And this is what we admire so much in Mr. Kennedy's poetry. He keeps his eye fixed on natural proportion and effect. He uses throughout his poem words

"Which speak of nothing more than what we are."

And hence it is, that there is so much of human interest in his descriptions, whilst we occasionally discover gleams of thought and feeling, which betray a soul beneath, yet undeveloped. We would urge Mr. Kennedy onward. He has not tried his strength fully yet—he is dif-

ferent only in the measure of his gifts—he is not generically different from those glorious writers of our elder time, whose natural and universal poetry must ever govern the “business and bosoms” of men.

We have said that Mr. Kennedy writes from experience and observation—that he has himself felt and thought. No one who had not done so could have written the following:—and with such the poem abounds.

“—— He therefore would inquire,
With kindness, for her ailing mother,
And for her little, prattling brother;
Stripping his daintiest flower-bed
To weave a chaplet for her head.
At moments, too, when Pierre was by,
He would invite her, carelessly,
Within his infant Eden's rounds;
Where, as she wandered o'er the grounds,
Upon her step he hung, and placed
His own on spots her foot had graced,
Plucking, and folding to his breast,
The blossoms by her fingers press'd.”—pp. 25, 26.

And again,

“She came at last—his cynosure,
Sparkling through disappointment's cloud—
In her soft vernal beauty, pure
As snow-drop in its shroud,
Unwonted care mark'd her attire,
Her conscious eyes repress'd their fire,
Sighs struggled through their broken tone
That spoke her pleasure at the meeting;
And those, by passion taught, alone
Could tell, when welcomed by her own,
Whether her step were faltering on,
Or timidly retreating.”—pp. 29, 30.

These are exquisite things:—they are feelings inspired not from authors, but from himself. His mind is rich in poetical associations—and he is wisely content with its riches.

The following is a touching picture of struggling endurance. Henry deserts Fleurette, and with him passes away from her the hour—“of glory in the grass, of freshness in the flower.” She is then described in a strain of rich beauty—

“O, wakeful nights and weary days
Were thine, fawn of the wilderness!
The thorn was bristling in thy ways,
The forest-flowret ceased to raise
Its head, thy paths to bless;
And on the precipice of being
Swam thy dim gaze—no succour seeing!

In her simplicity, she prayed
To HIM who doth the helpless aid,
For strength effectual to efface,
From first affection's sacred place,
His image, memory, and name,
Who, if he e'er felt hallowed flame
For her, had since forgot
Its source, as he had felt it not.
The virgin's angel minister
Wafted to heaven the guileless prayer,
Which, offered where all mercies flow,
Like down of slow-descending snow,

Soft floated to the crystal river,
In holiness melodious ever.
But help came not—Love lingered on,
A mourner by Hope's burial-stone."—pp. 46, 47.

He returns too late—he seeks her in vain :

" Backward and forward he traversed the way,
In other, brighter days, her choice ;
Pausing at times, her favourite lay
To trill, in an under voice :
O, how that melody used to bring
His blithesome mate on the swallow's wing !
Now it swung unheeded on the blast,
Thro' the scathed oak's spectral arms that past."—p. 58.

We close this poem, with a feeling which Mr. Kennedy will consider a high tribute of praise—a feeling of deep regret for the fate of poor Fleurette—whom he has described so exquisitely—and for whom—through his expressive and simple melodies—he has engaged our deepest sympathies. Well might he conclude—

—————" Far better had it been
For France and him, had she been queen,
Than Valois, dissolutely free,
Or a deceitful Medici—
Or any of the flaunting dames
Whom courtly history proclaims,
(As soft Tosseuse or Gabrielle)—
Forgetting the sad tale to tell
Of her who only loved too well !
Who in her spotless spring-time perished,
Crushed by the hand her bosom cherished!"—p. 64.

We separate from Mr. Kennedy, with every wish for the success of his poem. In these days of poetasting, it is a good thing to meet with a spark of original feeling—with any thing breathing of the freshness of nature. We would urge Mr. Kennedy forward ; we would not speak of what he has done :—for we know that he *may* do more and better—if he is content to live—not in the busy solitude of his own heart—but in the world. Amidst change of character and variety of scenery he will find the best opportunities for the development of his powers. One hint at parting—in this little poem we have all the bustle, machinery, and pantomime of the stage of life—we are mistaken if its author have not the requisite for a dramatic writer. Let him try the magic " bow :"—there would be no disgrace in defeat—and in success there would be exceeding glory !

* * * In the present day, when so many vapid, vague, and unmeaning effusions—in which wildness usurps the place of genius, and contempt of rules, genuine originality—are given to the world under the name of poetry, it is of great importance to the youthful aspirant after literary fame, and to youthful readers generally, who may be anxious not to have their time needlessly consumed, or their taste vitiated, to turn their attention to the best models, and thus enable them to form a just estimate of the works at present abroad in the world. Under this impression we have inserted the foregoing article in our pages, feeling assured that there is nothing so well calculated to effect this, as fair and impartial criticism, and a manly and candid discussion of those points about which individuals may differ ; at the same time, we must freely confess, that while we admire the taste of our

correspondent, and coincide with many of his critical remarks, so far as the mere idea of poetic composition is concerned, we differ from him *toto cælo*, in his judgments regarding *the men* of whom he speaks. While we may and must admire the genius of such a man as Shelley, his licentious principles, in our estimation, far more than counterbalance all his merits as a poet; but even these we consider questionable—at least we can by no means agree with our correspondent in the unbounded praise which he awards him. There can be no doubt that he wrote many pretty, nay, splendid pieces; but we will venture to affirm, that far more than one-half of his poetical compositions do not reach mediocrity. There is indeed throughout the entire, an effort at splendour and sublimity; but the very effort has destroyed the effect intended, and has, in a great many instances, rendered his writings totally incomprehensible.

We have elsewhere, on something of a similar occasion, recorded our opinion of Lord Byron, and we still fully abide by the decision we then pronounced—that no language can be too strong to express the indignation which every good man must feel towards an individual, who can promulgate sentiments, calculated either to sever those social and endearing engagements which are alone the source of happiness that many enjoy; or to bereave man of that hope of an hereafter, the contemplation of which, is the only pleasure left to thousands. We fully agree with Lord Byron, that while “imbecility may be pitied, or at most laughed at and forgotten, perverted powers demand the most decided reprehension;” and as readily subscribe to the sentiment of Gray, that “no admiration of genius—no deference to learning, should ever soften or subdue our aversion to the vicious, the profligate, or the unprincipled.”

It is a fact, indeed, which cannot be contradicted, that all our truly sublime poets incline to hope, and to cheerful ideas of futurity; and if Wordsworth and Coleridge are, as poets, inferior to Byron and Shelley, there is a point in which they rise above them to a proud pre-eminence; nor do we entertain a doubt, when time has given the writings of each a fair and impartial investigation, that the general voice will prefer Coleridge’s pure, uncontaminated outflowings of soul, to the sentimental, impassioned strains of Shelley’s poisoned pen; and that many of the natural, unsophisticated warblings of Wordsworth’s moral muse, will yet be preferred to the dark, plotting, depraved rhapsodies of a Byron: that the humble staff and scrip of “the poet of nature” will be infinitely more thought of, than the stiletto and dark lanthorn of the noble bard.

So much, however, for our own and our talented correspondent’s opinions relative to Byron and Shelley. Had he thought with us, “the Pelican Island,”—“the Course of Time,”—“Omniscience,” &c. must have thrown in such a saving clause, as would at least have redeemed the names of Montgomery and Pollok from utter oblivion, nor should their piety have made us ashamed of doing them justice. Why our old friend Crabbe, to whose works we have been often indebted for many an hour’s amusement, and who, with all his quaintness and fondness for alliteration, is decidedly a poet of no mean order, should have been so unceremoniously passed by, we cannot guess.

In the estimate formed by our correspondent, of the four great living poets, Rogers, Campbell, Scott, and Moore, we can by no means agree. At present, to allude particularly to each, would carry us far beyond our limits, but why he should thus slur over our Anacreon Moore, is, to us, certainly a matter of surprise, as it could not have been on account of his superabundant piety, or the morality of some of his earlier compositions; we must take it for granted, that it was simply because he did not consider him to have a just claim to poetic genius. Now, although not wishing to appear as the eulogist of Mr. Moore—and, while the determined enemy of such compositions as those of his which appeared under the name of “Little’s Poems,” we still cannot look upon that talented individual in any other light than as a poet of a very high order. We certainly know no author of

the present day, whose writings are distinguished by such grace and symmetry—which exhibit the same fair proportions, or display such an exquisite polish and beautiful finish, as the lighter lucubrations of Mr. Moore; nor do we know another individual possessing the same rare and happy talent of embellishing even a familiar and trivial idea, with a fine and delicate turn. But even in the higher walks of poetry, Mr. Moore is not by any means deficient in those talents requisite to prove his claims to the possession of true poetic genius. From his *Lalla Rookh*, for instance, we would undertake to show a happy combination of the various talents necessary to constitute a genuine poet of nature: Invention—imagery—order—pathos—sublimity—beautiful colouring—an easy and unincumbered flow of language—all combining to invest the work with a dazzling splendour, and at the same time a softness of shading seldom equalled by any of his competitors. Considered, therefore, simply as a poet, we hold Mr. Moore to be by no means inferior to Shelley in any point of view, while, in some respects, he is decidedly his superior; in general, his language is simple, and though frequently sublime in the highest degree, is always perfectly intelligible—a meed of praise which cannot by any means be awarded to Shelley.

But we should suppose that the notions entertained about poetry at the other side of the channel, differ very materially from the opinions we have formed on the subject. As we are indebted for the critique in question to a member of the literati in the great city of London, and presume he speaks the sentiments of no small portion of the critics in that sapient metropolis, we may in some measure account for the difference of opinion existing between us, by supposing that as our city has not been so enlightened by the Illuminati of modern days, as that mart of Parnassus has been, we do not find it so easy to lose in poetic fervour, those religious scruples implanted in our breasts in early life. We certainly do not like appearing over fastidious, yet we must say we would have been much better pleased even with Mr. Kennedy, had he chosen some other subject for his muse, than the licentious amour of a powerful prince with a poor peasant girl.

But, in what we have stated, we may perhaps have let out a secret which we should have kept to ourselves, namely, that we do not write all the reviews which appear in our pages, (we reserve our artillery for matters of importance, such as “the Battle of Clontarf!”) still we beg to say, that for the sentiments expressed in all, we hold ourselves responsible, unless, as in the present instance, special exception be made.

EMAN OGE.

A TRANSLATION FROM AN ORIGINAL IRISH STORY.

Edmond O’Foelin, hereditary chieftain of the Decii, better known to his friends and followers by the familiar appellation of Eman Oge,* a title adopted to distinguish him from an ancient kinsman of the same name, was about eighteen years of age when his father was killed in a skirmish with a party of marauders, who, coming down on his possessions in the night, as was frequent in those days, drove away his cattle, and were proceeding with them towards their forts and fastnesses in the mountains, when the chieftain of the valley, at the head of a numerous body of armed retainers, pursued and overtook them. The plunderers, strong in numbers and in arms, on perceiving their pursuers, boldly faced about and gave them battle. During the rencontre, which was fierce and bloody, the chieftain received a deadly wound, and almost instantly

* Edmond the Younger.